

## BACKGROUND

- ❖ Deaths from drug overdoses pose a national public health burden, and despite increasing awareness of the opioid epidemic, such deaths continue to rise at an alarming rate in the United States
- ❖ While North Carolina was one of 15 reported states to see drug overdose death rates decrease from 2017 to 2018, Pitt County in particular saw a 150% increase opioid overdose calls to Pitt County's EMS in 2019
- ❖ Syringe services programs (SSPs) are one stride in addressing this public health crisis. SSPs were legalized in North Carolina in July 2016, and the SSP serving Pitt County (ekiM for Change) was started in October 2017
- ❖ In order to assess the perceived success of Pitt County's only SSP, we wanted to know what changes could be implemented to expand the number of individuals that our program impacted and better serve those who come on a regular basis

## MATERIALS & METHODS

- ❖ We administered a sixteen-question survey in conjunction with the CDC and the Pitt County Health Department addressing demographic information and potential venues for improvement at our SSP

## RESULTS

- ❖ A total of 28 participants completed the survey

	Male n (%)	Female n (%)				
Sex	15 (54)	13 (46)				
Age (years)	18-24 n (%)	25-29 n (%)	30-39 n (%)	40-49 n (%)	50-60 n (%)	>60 n (%)
	1 (.04)	4 (.14)	12 (.43)	6 (.21)	4 (.14)	1 (.04)

- ❖ Overall, the participants were satisfied with the services provided, but identified some areas for improvement

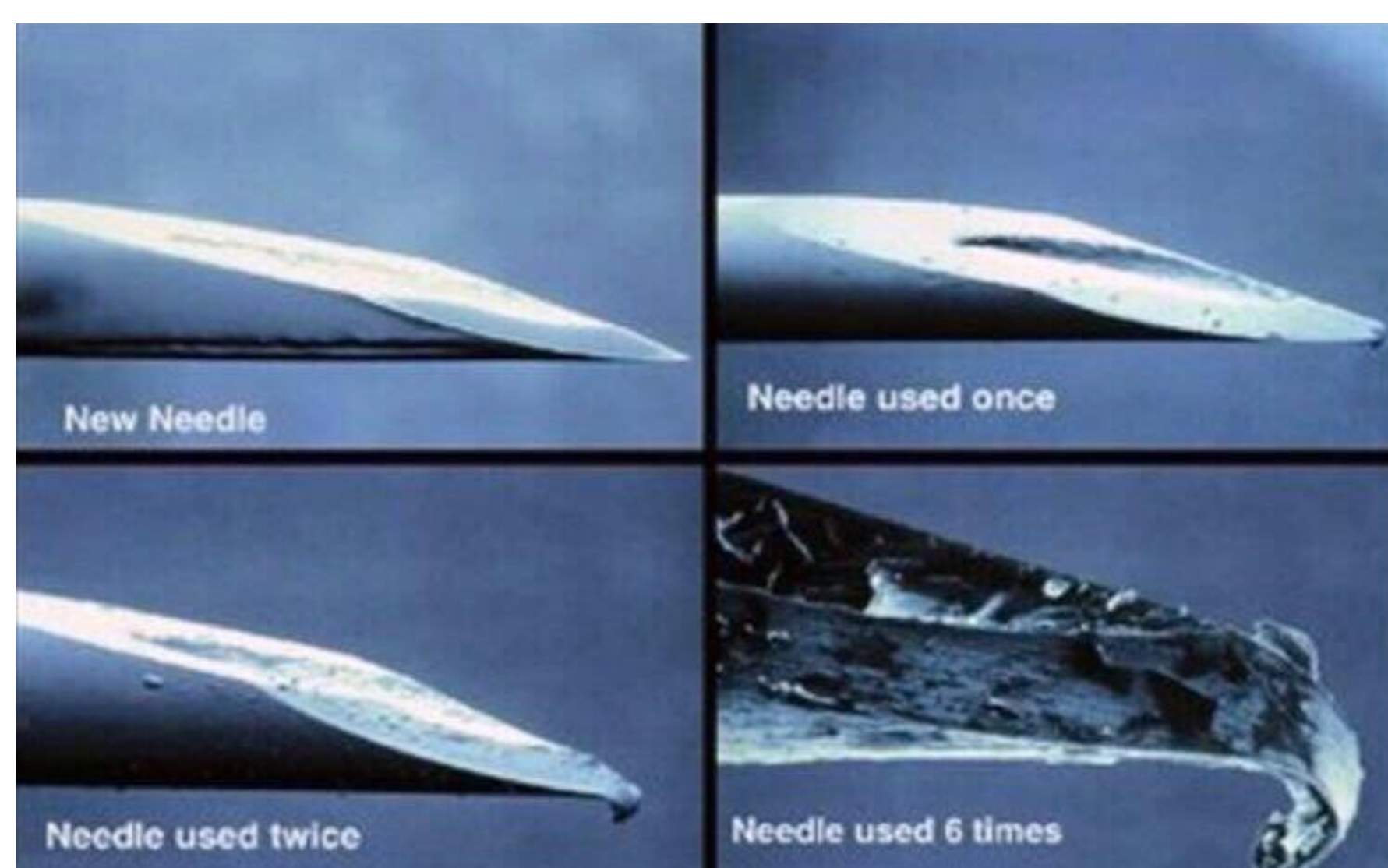
100% were satisfied with the program and community resources provided

96% were satisfied with the timing, but requested longer hours or more days during the week

75% would attend CPR classes if provided

64% would like to see information about safe injection, infection prevention and abscess care

61% would attend support groups to talk about hepatitis and HIV



### Cumulative SSP Data:

Syringes Provided: 122,533  
Syringes Returned: 45,783  
Naloxone Provided: 1,128  
Overdose Reversals: 309  
Fentanyl Test Strips Provided: 1,713

## DISCUSSION

- ❖ Overall, our participants were satisfied with the services provided
- ❖ We identified many venues for improvement – expanding the number of hours or days per week, additional lengths and gauges of syringes, expanding educational materials about safe injection, abscess care, HIV, hepatitis, and CPR

## Future Directions

- ❖ Developing educational materials regarding safe injection, abscess care, HIV and hepatitis A, B and C
- ❖ Organizing support groups to talk about disease process common within the people who inject drugs population
- ❖ Organizing hepatitis A and B vaccination days with the Pitt County Health Department
- ❖ Identify venues to address the rising overdose death rates from cocaine and psychostimulant drugs of abuse

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